

THE BUILDER,

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MANY things are before us, and many circumstances are demanding our attention, which render us loath to enter upon new matters of performance or promise until these are accomplished.

Some of these points are specially touched upon in the different articles of this number, and others remain to be mentioned.

Let us not have too many irons in the fire at once, but while we have a cessation from the specific suggestions of other parties, let us try to dispose of those already set down for our attention.

We have had submitted to us letters, concerning the Metropolitan Survey, the expected new Building Act, a new Builders' Company, a Distinct Architectural Exhibition; and our own proposals are committed in reference to what we are resolved to carry out, viz.—the delineation of gothic architectural examples; and what we are content to remain somewhat longer upon—a national Builders' Guild. All these matters, together with the business taken up last week in reference to the Carpenters' Benevolent Institution, and the enclosed subscription for Mr. Cummin's workmen, are before us. Let us and our readers bear them in mind, and, like good men of business, despatch one at a time before we encumber ourselves with more; by this we shall ensure success in present and future enterprise.

We are determined not to let the matters sleep on which we are engaged. A brilliant prospect is before us. Subscribers are increasing every day; and the kindest and most generous sympathy is manifested in our behalf—information is cheerfully contributed—there is not a member of either of the professions of Architecture and Engineering to whom we have had occasion to apply who does not treat us with the extreme of courtesy; all these circumstances determine us to exertion and perseverance.

The working men are those whose confidence we bid most loudly for, and we are proud to be able to do it without a compromise of our impartiality. We would encourage them to write—let them not fear as to the rejection of their communications—there is not a man of the highest and wealthiest of our subscribers, but who, like ourselves, is best pleased by the working man's confidence, and the working man's practical knowledge, is that which we all admire and estimate. We shall be most happy to put any drawing or writing they may scribble out into a proper shape, and to give them the benefit of their names being attached to their meritorious productions.

What delights us most of all is to see the young men tendering us their zealous and soul-stirring support; and God knows we have not pandered to any unworthy passion in the breasts of any one to secure it. We preach to them obedience and respect to their superiors, humility and diffidence as to themselves, pride only in their profession, and the practice of virtue.

Let it be that our foundations are laid in this species of secure and well-chosen material, and we have no fear as to the solidity of the upper works, nor as to the success and endurance of the whole structure.

Thus shall we be enabled to break down the

barriers of estrangement, to restore the alienated confidence between master and journeyman, to make the master regard his apprentice as a son, the apprentice to look up to the other as a father, to cause employers to give full confidence to tradesmen, and from among tradesmen and all to banish suspicion—at least we will endeavour for all this. A friend said to us one day, "You cannot make all men angels." We replied, "No, we do not hope for it; but we are resolved to keep them as far from devils as possible." Because we cannot accomplish all the good we would wish, is it any reason that we should not try?

We proceed upon no impracticable or fanciful theories, but work out for ourselves what we advance to others. An interminable field of useful labour is open to all, information and instruction presents itself at every turn; we cannot walk into a manufactory, stroll through a workshop, loiter about a building, read a page of a book, but treasures for our class present themselves; all we require are a hundred hands and eyes, and presently we shall have them; they are tendered to us on every side, and merely want one pure guiding principle, to conduct the whole as the working and effort of our mind.

Our work is but a mere shadow of what it must become, and we are so well satisfied with all that we have hitherto determined upon—the size of the paper fitting it for a book, the price, to which, we believe, we shall be able to adhere, even with considerable enlargements, when the advertising support has attained its expected average. We have many hopes for the present, and only now are solicitous to consolidate and complete so far as we have gone. Let us beg of our readers to put their hands to this work along with us.

GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE.

We are impatient to take in hand the matter in this respect to which we are pledged by the force of our own inclinations, as well as our engagement with our readers. But we have been waiting, as we will candidly confess, to have the offer of co-operation from some one to whom such a work would be as profitable and agreeable as it would be to ourselves and readers. We held out the invitation to a former number, and this week repeat it. In doing so we have no misgivings or fear of any misconception of our motives; the view we have taken being this—that there are many gentlemen, professional and amateurs, to whom such an offer would be most advantageous, whether as to the maturing their taste, enlightening their minds, or providing a systematic means of the exercise of a favourite investigation. We recollect well how we ourselves, some years ago, wandered over two or three counties, without a compass, or any defined plan to steer by, measuring and delineating old churches and other structures, and filling our portfolio with sketches that served at least for the gratification of a private circle of observers, and our own partial enlightenment. We did this at an expense, not considerable it is true, for we practised economy, but secured, at the same time, all the comforts of a rural peregrination. We never spent a more happy three months in our lives; but how much more we would have prolonged the enjoyment—how much more profitable to ourselves, and how infinitely more advantageous to others, to a large circle—to a whole community—would it have been, if *THE BUILDER*, or some such publication, had been on foot at the time, and

the editor or conductor of such a work had made us the offer, and we had embraced it, of publishing our collections; how much more systematic would have been our labours, and in the end how much more to our own renown would it have told. What would have been this to us at the time we mention we offer to many now, and we are confident that the young architect and the diligent amateur could select nothing so soul-enlivening—so grateful—so health-securing—so simple—so rational—and so substantially improving to himself and to thousands, as this co-operation with us. Nor need any one have qualms on the score of dignity, or stand higgling about the question of what is called the *respectability of the thing*. The noble and the honourable read, and will increase as the readers of this work—they contribute to its support in various ways, unasked and uninfluenced by any cause, but their kind appreciation of its humble merits. Neither, therefore, should distinction of rank or wealth make any man think it beneath him to commit his hand to the illustration of this work and the extension of its usefulness. Because we have not made it a mere trading speculation, so much the more are we entitled to assume this language. We give and are prepared to give largely and devotedly in the cause of art, and we presume in full confidence to invite others to associate themselves with us in this agreeable task.

To make the matter plainer, we put it thus—We know there are many architects and amateurs (of the latter particularly among the clergy) who live in the midst of a district, fertile in specimens of ancient structures, who could not be better employed in the forthcoming seasons of summer and autumn than in making excursions from one building to another, sketching, measuring, and exploring, and following a plan which we would take the liberty to prescribe, transmitting to us for publication the gatherings of their portfolio—exercising their minds in technical investigations, inquiries, and essays to accompany their draughts, and communicating through our publication to a wide circle, the great benefits of their united labours. We are entitled to ask for volunteers in such a work, for we enter on our task in much the same spirit, content to toil through the duty of the pioneer, and to encounter many risks, to secure what we believe, and are assured by every one capable of judging of the matter, to be a great common good. We shall still have the expense of the engraving, but this will, we have no doubt, be amply returned to us; and it will be gratifying to add to the fund of employment for that class of artists. We conclude, therefore, by respectfully and earnestly inviting this confidence and co-operation on the part of those who think with us, and approve of our proposals.

At the same time we beg to have it understood that if this invitation is not responded to, we shall proceed, at no matter what cost, to carry out our purpose; if free-labour will not accomplish it, hired labour shall,—or if the trained and skilled hand be not put forward voluntarily, we will enrol our corps of juniors; done the work shall and must be, but we have no fear of obtaining the same generous support from the rural as we have offers of from the town districts. In Dublin, Newcastle, Sheffield, Leeds, Coventry, as well as around us here, and in many other places, we have volunteer auxiliaries generously disposed to give us all that their time and avocations will admit of; we count, therefore, on the rural districts to have the thanks of many for chalking out this delightful and profitable exercise of their time and talent. A word more. We will just mention one instance on a large scale of amateur devotion to architecture, that our invited friends will do well to suffer to stimulate them; we mean the example of the accomplished Mr. Gally Knight; he has at great expense and labour published several works, and one lately on continental architecture,—and we could name several other equally generous contributors to the fund of public information—to all we say, "Go and do likewise."